

EAFP UK and Ireland Branches Second Meeting: “Aquatic animal health in a changing world”

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Following on from the success of the previous meeting in Keele in 2014, Prof. Sandra Adams from the Institute of Aquaculture Stirling kindly hosted the second UK and Ireland EAFP Branches meeting. In total 75 attended the event, with delegates from as far afield as Norway and Israel joining those from the UK and Ireland. The programme was very varied with 35 talks covering everything from molecular investigations of diseases of scallops to network analysis of salmonid movements.

Dr. Hamish Rodger (Vet Aqua International & Fish Vet Group) provided the opening plenary lecture, entitled ‘Priority and emerging health challenges for UK and Irish finfish aquaculture’. Hamish’s very interesting talk spanned the full gamut of diseases he has encountered over his varied career, finishing with up to date information on diseases affecting cleaner fish as well as new and emerging conditions in trout and salmon, such as puffy skin disease.

This was followed by a session on major disease challenges to the salmonid industry with the keynote, ‘Developments in integrated fish health management in the Scottish salmon farming industry’, provided by Dr. Iain Berrill from the Scottish Salmon Producers Association.

Following an excellent key note lecture from Dr. Rod Wilson from the University of Exeter ('Lessons from two high CO₂ worlds – future oceans and aquaculture'), the whole afternoon on the first day was dedicated to talks from a variety of PhD and other early career scientists. The standard of the talks was very high and it was hard to separate the thirteen excellent talks. However, awards of \$250 USD equivalent (kindly provided by Elsevier, publishers of *Fish and Shellfish Immunology*) were given to the four presentations considered to be the best by the judges. These were Lynn Chalmers and Koji Yamamoto (University of Stirling), Lyndsey Christie (University of Glasgow and CEFAS) and Nawroz Kareem (University of Keele). They and all the other presenters should be congratulated towards contributing to such a lively and stimulating session.

At the end of the first day there was a poster and wine reception followed by a very enjoyable late meeting dinner at the Vecchia Bologna, Bridge of Allan.

For the morning of the second day there were sessions on 'Major disease challenges to ornamental, cyprinid, shellfish and wild fish and cleaner fish disease'. For the cleaner fish disease session, Prof. Herve Migaud from the Institute of Aquaculture provided a well-received keynote entitled 'Advances and challenges in cleaner fish research'.

The final session in the afternoon discussed novel / future technologies and challenges. The meeting was brought to a close with discussions on future funding opportunities via the Scottish Aquaculture Innovation Centre and prizes given to the winning early years presenters.

The meeting was a great success, with evidence of plenty of networking taking place, both in the meeting room itself as well as when delegates were eating or having coffee in the well-appointed meeting centre or at the dinner. The delegates all commented on how the format of having all the talks in full plenary, rather than via parallel sessions, worked very well.

The exposure to the diversity of expertise and disciplines on offer was very stimulating and we all learnt an enormous amount. We are already looking forward to the next meeting, which Dr. Neil Ruane and colleagues from the Galway Marine Institute have kindly agreed to host. This will likely be sometime in September 2018.

Special thanks are given to our sponsors: Marine Harvest Scotland, MSD Animal Health, Ridge-way Biologicals Ltd, Elsevier, Skretting, SAIC, Aquatic Diagnostics Ltd and the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation.



Participants at the 2nd EAFP UK and Ireland branch meeting. Photo by Denny Conway.